



## What is ABS.Stat Beta?

### Access ABS.Stat Beta

ABS.Stat Beta is an interactive free online tool that presents data in a searchable, flexible and dynamic way.

ABS.Stat provides you with two options;

- a web browser interface where you can view, query and download data; and
- a web services interface described in a machine-processable format using the Statistical Data and Metadata Standard (SDMX) allowing machine-to-machine mechanisms for accessing and sharing ABS data

The ABS.Stat web browser interface allows you to:

- search and discover ABS statistics
- query, view and download data - choose pre-packaged data or customise data to your own requirements
- view valuable metadata alongside the data
- export data in a range of formats such as Excel and CSV as well as SDMX.

The ABS.Stat web services allows the exchange of data between computer systems (the machine-to-machine services) facilitating the sharing of data through a programmatic interface across the internet.

Full 'User Assistance' for both options is available from the top right hand navigation bar.

Selected datasets are loaded as soon as possible after their 11:30am release on the ABS website. However, data in the ABS.Stat beta release may **not necessarily be the most up to date**. You are advised to check the ABS website ([www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)) for the latest data. We have created an [ABS.Stat release calendar](#) which provides expected dataset release and update information. The [ABS.Stat current dataset status](#) table lists datasets that are available with latest release information.

ABS.Stat uses software which has been jointly developed by a consortium of organisations including the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Statistics New Zealand and others.

Access [ABS.Stat Beta](#) today and tell us what you think!



## Why a beta release?

ABS.Stat beta release allows users to try ABS.Stat and provide feedback, recognising there is still work to be done on enhancing the tool as it is in development and we know there are still some issues to resolve. We have compiled a [list of issues](#) identified so far and are working to rectify these.

This beta version does not include Australian financial year data or any quarterly data with reference periods other than the standard March, June, September and December quarters, for example, detailed quarterly Labour Force data which are issued in February, May, August and November.

Future versions of ABS.Stat will include financial year and all quarterly datasets along with delivery of the

latest data with embargo controls similar to the ABS website.

If you find further issues please email us at [abs.stat@abs.gov.au](mailto:abs.stat@abs.gov.au). We also invite you to provide your feedback on the overall design, content and usability of ABS.Stat via the 'feedback form' found in the 'getting started' box. The ABS appreciates your input - it will help us as we further enhance the product.



### **Why is the ABS developing ABS.Stat?**

ABS.Stat aims to improve access to multidimensional, aggregated ABS data. It is being developed in response to user demand for more powerful and flexible tools for research and data exchange. It will meet the needs of large data consumers (including, international organisations, Australian government and value added re-sellers) as well as providing a user interface for all users of ABS data.



### **Where can I find help using ABS.Stat Beta?**

ABS.Stat User Assistance Material can be accessed from the left hand navigation bar. View our suite of Online Video Tutorials, Frequently Asked Questions and User Guides for both the ABS.Stat Web Browser and the SDMX Web Services.

This page last updated 15 March 2013

## ABS.Stat Release Calendar Last Updated 13/05/2013

Publication	Catalogue Number	Frequency	Next Expected Update
Economy			
Balance of Payments and International Investment Position	5302.0	Quarterly	04 June 2013
Business Indicators	5676.0	Quarterly	03 June 2013
Consumer Price Index	6401.0	Quarterly	24 July 2013
House Price Indexes: Eight Capital Cities	6416.0	Quarterly	06 August 2013
Housing Finance	5609.0	Monthly	13 May 2013
International Merchandise Exports	5368.0	Monthly	06 June 2013
International Merchandise Imports	5439.0	Monthly	16 May 2013
International Trade Price Indexes	6457.0	Quarterly	01 August 2013
Labour Force	6202.0	Monthly	13 June 2013
Private New Capital Expenditure and Expected Expenditure	5625.0	Quarterly	30 May 2013
Producer Price Indexes	6427.0	Quarterly	02 August 2013
Wage Price Index	6345.0	Quarterly	15 May 2013
Industry			
Building Approvals	8731.0	Monthly	30 May 2013
Internet Activity, Household Use of Information Technology	8153.0	Quarterly	08 October 2013
Retail Trade	8501.0	Monthly	03 June 2013
Population/People			
Apparent Consumption of Alcohol	4307.0.55.001	Annual	TBA
National Regional Profile	1379.0.55.001	Annual	TBA

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### Current Dataset Status in ABS.Stat Last Updated 13/05/2013

Publication	Catalogue Number	Reference Period	Date Updated
<b>Economy</b>			
Balance of Payments and International Investment Position	5302.0	December 2012	15/03/2013
Business Indicators	5676.0	December 2012	15/03/2013
Consumer Price Index (CPI)	6401.0	March 2013	24/04/2013
House Price Indexes: Eight Capital Cities	6416.0	March 2013	07/05/2013
Housing Finance	5609.0	February 2013	15/04/2013
International Merchandise Exports	5368.0	March 2013	07/05/2013
International Merchandise Imports	5439.0	March 2013	17/04/2013
International Trade Price Indexes	6457.0	March 2013	02/05/2013
Labour Force	6202.0	April 2013	09/05/2013
Private New Capital Expenditure and Expected Expenditure	5625.0	December 2012	15/03/2013
Producer Price Indexes	6427.0	March 2013	03/05/2013
Wage Price Index	6345.0	December 2012	20/02/2013
<b>Industry</b>			
Building Approvals	8731.0	March 2013	03/05/2013
Internet activity, Household Use of Information Technology	8153.0	December 2012	09/4/2013
Retail Trade	8501.0	March 2013	06/05/2013
<b>Population/People</b>			
Apparent Consumption of Alcohol	4307.0.55.001	2011	14/12/2012
National Regional Profiles (NRP)	1379.0.55.001	2010	14/12/2012

This page last updated 10 May 2013



**Here are the issues we know about (as at 14 December 2012) which we are working to resolve.**

### Functionality

- On opening ABS.Stat the theme drop-down menu is not expanded. Selecting "General Statistics" will allow further selections to be made.
- The "Find in Themes" search does not advise you if there are no search results, so it looks as though a search has not been performed. You may wish to use the drop-down menu to search for themes.
- The date and time stamp is currently GMT (Greenwich Mean Time) but we are investigating whether we can change this to AEST.
- ABS.Stat currently times out after 20 minutes of inactivity. You will need to refresh your browser, however you will then lose any selections and layout changes you have made. We are currently looking at extending the time period before a time out occurs.
- When using the search option and selecting an entry in the search, the metadata information panel (right hand side tab) does not update to the current selection.
- ABS.Stat does not display release information.
- Metadata print window does not display lower-level metadata.
- Submit button under feedback and contact tab does not always appear. Press the tab key whilst cursor is in text box to fix the issue.
- There is no indication of licence conditions on exported files. We are looking to include this.
- Search for multiple words usually returns a "null" find. ABS.Stat requires the use of quotations surrounding the phrase (e.g. "Exports of Goods") to work correctly.

### Visual

- Large column labels do not wrap, making it hard to read compressed descriptions.

### Product Limitations

- There is no facility to save queries. We do have a save query option planned however we can not implement this yet due to current technical limitations.
- Does not include Australian financial year data or any quarterly data with reference periods other than the standard March, June, September and December quarters, for example, detailed quarterly Labour Force data which are issued in February, May, August and November. Future versions of ABS.Stat will include financial year and all quarterly datasets.
- As we do not load new datasets or update dataset series immediately following the 11:30am release, data may not necessarily be the most up to date. You should check the ABS website ([www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)) for the latest data and we will continue to load new datasets and update dataset series, as soon as possible after the embargo (11.30 am.) is lifted on the day the data is released.
- Time Series IDs are not yet available within the product. These will be included in a future release of ABS.Stat.

## ABS.Stat User Assistance Material



### Web Browser User Guide

**Web Browser User Guide** - everything you need to know about ABS.Stat web browser interface.



### Web Services User Guide

**Web Services User Guide** - everything you need to know about our SDMX Web Services.



### Frequently Asked Questions

**Frequently Asked Questions** - answers to the most commonly asked questions.



### Online Video Tutorials

**Online Video Tutorials** - a series of short videos demonstrating ABS.Stat and how to use its various functions.

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## Frequently Asked Questions about ABS.Stat - Beta

Q1. What is ABS.Stat?

Q2. When will it be released and what statistics will be available?

Q3. How will ABS.Stat differ from the current publication of statistics?

Q4. Who will be able to use ABS.Stat?

Q5. Will ABS.Stat be free?

Q6. Are there any special system requirements for ABS.Stat?

Q7. How can I use and consume the ABS.Stat web services?

Q8. What is SDMX and why is it relevant to ABS.Stat?

Q9. How can I learn more about using ABS.Stat?



## Answers to Frequently Asked Questions about ABS.Stat - Beta

### **Q1. What is ABS.Stat?**

ABS.Stat is an interactive, free online tool that presents datasets in a searchable, flexible and dynamic way. ABS.Stat presents users with two options, a web browser to view, query and download data and a web service to facilitate machine to machine communication via the use of the Statistical Data and Metadata Standard (SDMX). The web service enables other organisations to interface with ABS.Stat and customise the data in their own environments.

The ABS.Stat web interface allows you to:

- search and discover ABS statistics
- query, view and download data - choose pre-packaged data or customise data to your own requirements
- view valuable metadata alongside the data
- export data in a range of formats such as Excel and CSV as well as SDMX.

Access to ABS.Stat is open and free of charge.

### **Q2. When will it be released and what statistics will be available?**

ABS.Stat - Beta was released publicly on 14 December 2012. ABS.Stat provides a range of data released by the ABS.

Data in this ABS.Stat is not necessarily the most up to date, you should check the ABS website (ABS.gov.au) for the latest data. We will continue to load new datasets and update dataset series, as soon as possible after the embargo (11.30 am.) is lifted on the day the data is released.

This version does not include Australian financial year data or any quarterly data with reference periods other than the standard March, June, September and December quarters. For example, detailed quarterly

Labour Force data are issued in February, May, August and November and will not be included initially.

However, future versions of ABS.Stat will include financial year and all quarterly datasets along with delivery of the latest data with embargo controls similar to the ABS website.

### **Q3. How will ABS.Stat differ from the current publication of statistics?**

Currently ABS statistics are available on our website as static Excel spreadsheets, PDF and SuperTable SRD (summary record database) file downloads. In contrast, ABS.Stat provides a dynamic and direct method of accessing ABS data through the use of dynamic tables and intuitive search functionality. ABS.Stat also provides web services in SDMX format for automated machine-to-machine data exchange. Like the ABS Census products, CData online and Census Tablebuilder, ABS.Stat provides:

- multi-dimensional aggregated data
- support for pre-packaged tables and dynamic self-service pick and choose tables
- extendable data visualisation
- SDMX web data services for automated and efficient machine-to-machine data exchange

### **Q4. Who will be able to use ABS.Stat?**

Anyone can use ABS.Stat as it is aimed at all users and consumers of our data. ABS.Stat has features that support easy selection of and access to data for those whose needs are simple and straightforward. In addition it has features that support the needs of those with more advanced and complex requirements. To learn more about using ABS.Stat please refer to the [ABS.Stat User Guide](#).

### **Q5. Will ABS.Stat be free?**

Yes. Like all the statistics available through our current dissemination methods including the ABS website, access to ABS.Stat will be free of charge. In future ABS.Stat versions we will be offering a free login account service for those who want to save their dynamically generated tables for viewing later on and for those who want to customise their experience through setting user preferences in order to quickly access pre-packaged datasets of interest

### **Q6. Are there any special system requirements for ABS.Stat?**

No. You will require the following standard internet access set-up:

- Broadband Internet access;
- Internet Browsing software: Windows Internet Explorer 6.0 or higher, Mozilla Firefox 2.0 or higher, Safari 3.1 or higher.

### **Q7. How can I use and consume the ABS.Stat web services?**

High-end data consumers can use ABS.Stat web services to automatically extract datasets via machine-to-machine communications over the internet. Establishing ABS.Stat web services requires some technical knowledge as the web services are written using the Simple Object Access Protocol (SOAP) standard. Information about how establish web services is available on the [ABS.Stat User Guide](#) page.

### **Q8. What is SDMX and why is it relevant to ABS.Stat?**

SDMX, or Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange, is an initiative to foster common, open standards for the exchange of statistical information. It aims to foster common standards and guidelines for the exchange and sharing of statistical data and metadata, where the two are presented together, with an emphasis on aggregated data. Inclusion of the metadata gives context to the data exchanged, and helps ensure that the information is immediately understandable and therefore more useful than if it was



presented without the relevant metadata.

Common standards and guidelines created by the SDMX community enable easy access to statistical data and make data more comparable, more meaningful and generally more usable. For further information please see the [SDMX](#) website.

#### **Q9. How can I learn more about using ABS.Stat?**

The instructional [ABS.Stat User Guide](#) will help you to become familiar with the functionality and features of ABS.Stat. The release of ABS.Stat Beta will introduce you to multi-dimensional data cubes and give you the chance to learn more and interact further with ABS.Stat.

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## ABS.Stat Online Video Tutorials

To help you get started with ABS.Stat we have produced a series of short tutorials. You will need Flash Player/Quick Time Player to view the tutorials.



### **1. Welcome to ABS.Stat**

Introducing ABS.Stat: what is it, why has it been developed, and what are the benefits and uses of this product?

Duration: 01:39

File size: 1.12MB



### **2. A tour of the ABS.Stat Browser Interface**

A quick tour around the ABS.Stat browser to see what functions are available.

Duration: 03:44

File size: 4.02MB



### **3. About ABS.Stat Metadata**

An explanation of what metadata is, including the various levels - Dataset, Dimension, Dimension Member and Observation and where to find metadata within ABS.Stat.

Duration: 03:29

File size: 4.97MB



### **4. Accessing and Locating Data**

All about searching and browsing themes, tables and predefined tables.

Note: Video 5 - building customised tables will define and explain dimension and dimension members to you in further detail.

Duration: 03:21

File size: 4.31MB



### **5. Building Customised Tables**

How to construct your own customised tables by selecting dimensions, layout and custom options.

Duration: 02:34

File size: 2.43MB



### **6. Building Customised Tables: Selecting Dimensions**

Continuation of 5. Building Customised Tables: Explains selecting and de-selecting various

dimension members.

Duration: 09:51

File size: 7.50MB



## **7. Other functions in selecting dimensions**

Information on dimension member colour coding and searching dimensions. Demonstration of quick access to customised dimensions.

Duration: 03:33

File size: 3.89MB



## **8. Layout**

Learn how to customise the layout of your table.

Duration: 03:19

File size: 4.20MB



## **9. Customise Table Options**

How to modify characteristics of datasets to make your table more useable.

Duration: 02:07

File size: 2.42MB



## **10. Exporting Information**

How to export your table to an Excel, CSV, or SDMX file.

Duration: 02:45

File size: 5.37MB



## **11. My Queries**

How to combine two or more different queries.

Duration: 01:55

File size: 2.23MB

This page first published 1 March 2013

## GovHack 2013 - Participant information



**07 June 2013** - ABS award winners announced.

### Proud Gold sponsor, the ABS, celebrates a successful GovHack 2013

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and the National Statistical Service are proud to announce the ABS award winners for the categories of Data Journalism and Open Government. The ABS was a proud Gold sponsor GovHack 2013, which was held in 8 locations around Australia bringing together over 1,000 people to work on public government data.

Over forty high quality entries were developed and submitted for the ABS awards over the weekend from 31 May to 2 June and it has been a challenge to review so many innovative entries. It was exciting to see so many creative applications of ABS data. Open data was presented by data visualisations, mash ups and pooled with other official datasets to present engaging applications and tell statistical stories for the Australian community.

The ABS offers our congratulations to the winners, the event organisers, all participants, and other sponsors for this highly successful event.

### ABS GovHack Award Winners

The ABS sponsored two award categories; Open Government and Data Journalism, to encourage and promote the use of ABS.Stat datasets.

- The winner of the **Data Journalism award** (Innovative use of ABS.Stat) **3M3 Team**.

**Crothead project** -Used the ABS.Stat SDMX web services and produced an application. This applications allows users to go in and profile areas using a categorisation produced from National Regional Profile Data.

**Best efforts go to:**  
- **Blackhawke team**

**OpenDataWeb project** put in a huge effort to understand and use ABS.Stat SDMX web services for this project. The feedback from Black Hawke on experiences using and understanding SDMX will assist the ABS in providing suitable web services for application developers into the future.

Criteria:

- All entries must be open source, meaning the code produced during the competition is available for anyone to use

- Must use the ABS.Stat datasets web service to ensure always accessing the most up to date data in any applications
- Present ABS.Stat statistics in an innovative, informative and creative way.
- Make statistics engaging for viewers
- Applications should encourage users to interact in some way with the data such as select the area they are interest in or select some dimensions of the data of interest

- The winner of the **Open Government award** (Innovative pooling of ABS.Stat machine readable datasets with at least one other non-ABS dataset) **Atomic 51 team**.

**Australia in Review (Air) project** - This project provided a comprehensive view of Australia's history combining a number of data sets and presentation style of data. The project contained a 'slider' which allowed users to easily view points on our history.

**Best efforts go to:**

- **Bauble Apps team**

**Our History project** - was an innovative application using both photographs and data with a hover box on the graphs to analyse changes through time. This application has good potential as an educational tool.

- **Neville and the Death Ducks**

**Deathmatch project** - this was an engaging, innovative use of Causes of Death data. It is likely to engage younger users and encourage them to explore this data set.

Criteria:

- All entries must be open source, meaning the code produced during the competition is available for anyone to use.
- Must use the ABS.Stat datasets web service to ensure always accessing the most up to date data in any applications
- Present statistics in an innovative, informative and creative way.
- Make statistics engaging for viewers
- ABS datasets to be used are available in ABS.Stat and the application must include **and at least one other non-ABS dataset**.

- **Each winning entry will receive a \$1,000 prize**

**More information on GovHack:**

**What is GovHack?**

GovHack is an event that draws together people from government, industry, academia and of course, the general public to mashup, reuse, and remix government data. GovHack is about finding new ways to do great things and encouraging open government and open data.

**Who can enter?**

GovHack was open to everyone and anyone. From data vis, designers and UX'ers through to web developers and hard core application developers.

**What's in it for you?**

GovHack provides an opportunity to get exposure to new ideas from different perspectives about technologies and approaches you never get to experiment with in your day to day job or at university. This is an opportunity test run those ideas you've had, but never had the chance to partner up with someone or the dedicated time with experts around you to make the idea a reality.

You will also be in the running for prize money and grants for the best work undertaken with government data across a number of major and minor categories. See the awards section following.

Further information on GovHack, please visit the [GovHack website](#).

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